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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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NRO review(s) completed.

7 JUL 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Comptroller, National Reconnaissance Office

SUBJECT: Delta III Series Camera Justification

1. In response to your question of the logic and reasoning behind the purchase of two more Delta III cameras for the IDEALIST Program, the following points are salient:

a. The Delta series cameras were designed to provide high resolution convergent stereo photography of targets such as SAM-2 sites where maximum altitude over target is required.

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c. At present, our inventory is three Delta III systems including the one that is currently on loan to the Air Force. We intend to increase this inventory to five so that we have the capability to launch missions of this type from two operating locations.

d. The economics of field support such as tech reps, spares, etc., are such that the support of five cameras is only slightly more than that needed for two.

e. Some covert reconnaissance flights require that our capabilities be greater than those derived from the 2½ foot ground resolution that the B camera provides. The Delta series camera meets this requirement.

f. The problems you referred to probably were the high humidity environments encountered that resulted in film sticking and/or slipping from the rolls. This problem has been whipped and the two occurrences of this type are now past history.

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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2. The Delta system has been used to confirm missile site dismantling in Cuba, [redacted] ground supply routes in North Vietnam, [redacted] the submarine count and at present is being employed at [redacted] for location of ground activity along jungle trails.

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3. I hope that this satisfies your question. At present the contractor is proceeding as programmed to produce the two Delta III cameras.

W. D. SHELDON



Director of Reconnaissance, CIA

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Signature recommended:

[REDACTED]

Director of Special Activities

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PS/OSA: [REDACTED] (1 July 66)

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